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Abstract

This paper examines how and why the European Union's (EU) external relations training developed over time. In the European Commission diplomatic training began rather late in the 1990s but within a few years it gained momentum, in particular in the run-up to the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS). Overall, the EU's approach to external relations training has been rather reactive and poorly coordinated across different initiatives. The EEAS offers the opportunity to develop a more coherent and more strategic long-term training concept. Both internal and external factors account for the incremental development of the EU's external relations training. On the one hand, it underwent changes in response to Treaty reforms and the development of external action as well owing to more general administrative reforms in the Commission. On the other hand, external factors such as the changing nature of diplomacy itself or of training methodologies can be expected to have an impact on training needs and forms.

The heterogeneous composition, expanded tasks and envisaged impact of the EEAS call for a joint professional training of its staff in order to promote socialisation effects toward of a common diplomatic culture and 'esprit de corps'. In addition to imparting relevant knowledge and skills, training could thus serve as a strategic tool for the development of the Service and of EU external action. Yet, member states have different traditions of diplomatic training and diverging views on the additional need for training of their diplomats. Also the EU institutions appear to have a preference for the preservation of their own training initiatives at the expense of a more ambitious and more coherent approach.

Introduction: training for EU diplomacy – *ad hoc* or strategic?

At the end of the Cold War and with the birth of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the Commission's External Service began to develop rapidly.¹ Within a decade (1988-1998) the number of Commission Delegations rose from 70 to 126, and with this expansion the staff grew as well.² Unlike most national embassies, the Delegations did not consist of professional diplomats but mainly of regular civil servants from the Directorates-General (DGs) of the European Commission in charge of external affairs (*famille Relex*).³ "In an effort to offset this lack of diplomatic professionalism, the Commission organized a system of training for those planning to work abroad. However, this training [...] was] rudimentary compared to the general curriculum of traditional diplomats."⁴ Since then various initiatives have been developed and implemented. The European Union's (EU) fledgling Ministry for Foreign Affairs – the European External Action Service (EEAS) established in 2011 – became not only bigger and more important than the External Service, but also more diverse. The EEAS is composed of (former) officials of the Commission and of the Council Secretariat as well as national diplomats – and from July 2013 onwards access for officials from other EU institutions is expected. A first competition for administrators in the field of external relations takes place in 2012. When the Service will reach its full capacity, EU officials should represent at least 60% of staff at administrator level and at least one-third of all EEAS staff should come from national diplomatic services.⁵

Although the High Representative was to take "appropriate measures" for "adequate common training" of EEAS staff within one year,⁶ relatively little attention has so far been paid to this aspect.⁷ In her report based on the functioning of the Service in the first year of its operation, the High Representative briefly stated the

¹ The External Service was based within DG Relex and consisted of the Delegations' staff.

² Michael Bruter, "Diplomacy without a State: The External Delegations of the European Commission", *Journal of European Public Policy*, vol. 6, no. 2, 1999, p. 184.

³ Besides the former DG Relex, the Commission's 'Relex family' comprised DG Development, Enlargement, Trade, ECHO and AIDCO.

⁴ Bruter, *op.cit.*, p. 191.

⁵ Council of the European Union, "Council Decision 2010/427/EC of 26 July 2010 establishing the organisation and functioning of the European External Action Service", *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 201, 3 August 2010, Article 6.9.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Article 6.12.

⁷ Simon Duke, "Diplomatic Training and the Challenges Facing the EEAS", *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2012, p. 95.

pursuit of “a two-pronged approach” to training: on the one hand, “a high degree of business continuity regarding the existing training options available for Commission and Council staff working in the area of external relations”, and, on the other hand, “continued consultations with member states and relevant training providers [...] on options for the future”.⁸ The creation of a European Diplomatic Academy, however, while not being ruled out, “is not likely to be possible in the short term because of the risk of duplication and budget constraints”.⁹

As Lloveras Soler pointed out, “[t]here is a clear distinction between training in preparation for the diplomatic profession and subsequent training for established diplomats and, surprisingly, a lack of research on either”.¹⁰ Preparation of diplomats is largely determined by national perspectives and training in EU affairs is often optional. Whereas some countries such as Germany, Italy or Spain require extensive and varied diplomatic training, others such as the United Kingdom prefer much shorter and more practical training on the job. Various diplomatic cultures thus exist in the EU and any harmonisation appears to be very difficult. Also the EU institutions put very different emphasis on training and often fail to coordinate their approaches (resulting in the use of different electronic platforms, evaluation forms, etc.).

Training may serve at least three different purposes: to impart knowledge, to train diplomatic skills and to socialise participants into a certain collective identity or ‘esprit de corps’. If the goal is to create an EU diplomatic culture, appropriate training is a crucial component for the success of the European External Action Service. Spence argues that “European diplomacy has become characterized by the existence of two broad but distinct diplomatic careers, each followed by diplomats *stricto sensu*, yet with different mindsets – national and supranational – cooperating, sometimes willingly, sometimes reluctantly, in an interplay between national diplomacy, EU diplomacy and the ambitions of the Lisbon Treaty”.¹¹ There are indeed two main groups in need of training: civil servants coming from within the EU require training in diplomacy and diplomatic practice, and civil servants that are seconded from national foreign ministries need training in functions and procedures

⁸ European External Action Service, “Report by the High Representative to the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission”, Brussels, 22 December 2011, para 37.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Josep M. Lloveras Soler, “The New EU Diplomacy: Learning to Add Value”, *EUI Working Papers*, RSCAS 2011/05, Florence, European University Institute, 2011, p. 16.

¹¹ David Spence, “Taking Stock: 50 Years of European Diplomacy”, *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2009, p. 236.

of the EU and adapt to work in a multicultural environment. For seconded national experts other than from the foreign ministries (e.g. from ministries of economics, trade or development) both may apply. Another dimension is added by the fact that also military personnel are part of the EEAS, thus adding military culture(s) to the diplomatic culture(s).

This paper examines how and for what reasons the European Union's external relations training developed over time. The training needs have grown with the development of the External Service and its integration into the EEAS. In general, the EU's approach to external relations training has been reactive rather than proactive and it has been poorly coordinated across the different EU programmes and joint initiatives with the member states. Both internal and external factors account for its incremental development. On the one hand, the EU's external relations training had to react to Treaty reforms in the field and to more general administrative reforms. On the other hand, external factors such as the changing nature of diplomacy itself (e.g. the rise of public diplomacy) or of training methodologies (such as e-learning or blended training) had an impact.

This paper first reviews the major initiatives of the EU's external relations training and the underlying reasons for this development and then presents the current state of EEAS training and the longer-term option of a European Diplomatic Academy.

The development of diplomatic training needs in the EU

The need for a more systematic approach to training was recognised by the European Commission in the mid-1990s. In February 1994 it decided to create a Unified External Service and set up a working group to report on its longer term requirements. As a result of the 1996 'Williamson Report', an obligation to serve abroad was introduced with a mandatory rotation between DG Relex and the Delegations, and the External Service organised in-house training, in particular for pre-posting, continuous training and language courses.¹² Reflecting this newly found attention, the Commission annually produced a policy document on the development of the External Service. Further changes, such as a redeployment of staff, the employment of more local staff, the creation of new Delegations or the regionalisa-

¹² David Williamson was then Secretary-General of the Commission. See European Commission, Communication à la Commission, "Rapport sur les besoins à plus long terme du Service extérieur de la Commission", Brussels, SEC(96) 554, 20 March 1996, p. 6.

tion of Delegations, followed.¹³ Also the Council identified the need to train diplomatic staff and in 1995 recommended member states to introduce European affairs training sessions and to admit representatives of other member states as well as of all Community institutions to these training courses.¹⁴

Three main internal factors stimulated the demand for more training in external relations: first, the increasing number and role of Commission Delegations extended the staff's tasks from acting as project managers implementing Community aid and technical assistance¹⁵ to representing the European Union's interests on a broad range of issues. In the past only a few major Delegations included a full political section.¹⁶ Moreover, sectoral Directorates-General like DG Trade, DG Development or DG Research increasingly placed own personnel in the Delegations.¹⁷

Second, general management and staff reforms carried out in the Commission as well as specific reforms in external affairs, such as deconcentration ("passing responsibility for development aid from Headquarters to Delegations") and decentralisation ("passing responsibility from the Commission to the beneficiary country"),¹⁸ had implications for training needs. As part of the Commission's 'Kinnock reforms',¹⁹ an ambitious plan for training and professionalisation of Delegation staff was adopted in

¹³ European Commission, Communication to the Commission, "Development of the External Service of the Commission, Further Decisions on Staff Policy, Working Methods and the Development of the Network", Brussels, SEC(97) 605, 8 April 1997; European Commission, "Communication from the Commission on the Multiannual Plan to Allocate External Service Resources", Brussels, SEC(1998) 1261 final, 22 July 1998; and European Commission, Communication from the Commission, "The Development of the External Service", Brussels, COM(1999) 180, 21 April 1999.

¹⁴ Council of the European Union, "Report on the Training of Junior Diplomatic Staff and Proposals", Brussels, 13033/95, 20 December 1995.

¹⁵ On the beginnings of the Commission Delegations, starting with technical inspectors being sent to the newly independent African states for the implementation of the European Development Fund and the gradual achievement of diplomatic privileges and immunities from the host countries since the mid-1970s, see Véronique Dimier and Mike McGeever, "Diplomats Without a Flag: The Institutionalization of the Delegations of the Commission in African, Caribbean and Pacific Countries", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, vol. 44, no. 3, 2006, pp. 485-505.

¹⁶ Bruter, *op.cit.*, p. 195.

¹⁷ For an analysis of successive reforms of the Commission Delegations, see David Spence, "The European Commission's External Service", *Public Policy and Administration*, vol. 19, no. 3, 2004, pp. 61-76.

¹⁸ European Commission, "Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament concerning the Development of the External Service", Brussels, COM(2000) 456 final, 18 July 2000, p. 3.

¹⁹ After the Santer Commission resigned in 1999 over allegations of corruption, Neil Kinnock was appointed Commissioner for administrative reform in the Prodi Commission.

2003.²⁰ It set the target to increase the number of training days per staff member to 10 days per year (from an average of 2.1 days in 2003). Moreover, the establishment of a network of European diplomatic training institutions was envisaged in order “to draw as much as possible on existing expertise and training capacity with Member States and/or non-official training institutions”, also “in the context of the discussions on the creation of a European Foreign Minister and a Joint European External Action Service”.²¹

Third, the development of the CFSP generated ‘spillover effects’ for training such as the European Diplomatic Programme (EDP), the European Security and Defence College (ESDC) or CFSP seminars for member state diplomats (see below).

Finally, as an external factor, the changing nature of diplomacy itself has called for new topics and forms of diplomatic training. States and other international players interact through the mechanisms of representation, communication and negotiation, and all three functions of diplomacy have in the 21st century increasingly been challenged. There are more actors represented in the diplomatic field, more channels of communication and more issues to deal with, and these challenges need to be reflected in diplomatic training as well (see below).

In light of such developments, calls for more training became louder in the past decade. When the Amsterdam Treaty in 1999 created the post of the High Representative for the CFSP, the European Parliament, while acknowledging the progress made by the Commission in training officials in the field of external relations, still considered the situation less than satisfactory. Therefore, it repeatedly called for the creation of a ‘College of European Diplomacy’ or a ‘European Diplomatic Academy’.²² Such a College would be open to Commission and Council officials as well as member state diplomats – now EEAS officials – and provide not just technical training in Union policies but also “full-blown diplomatic and international relations

²⁰ European Commission, Communication to the Commission, “Staff Training for the External Service”, C(2003) 4334, Brussels, 18 November 2003.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

²² For example, European Parliament, “European Parliament resolution of 5 May 1999 on the role of the Union in the world: implementation of the common foreign and security policy for 1998”, *Official Journal of the European Communities*, C 279, 1 October 1999, p. 223; European Parliament, “European Parliament resolution of 5 September 2000 on a common Community diplomacy (2000/2006(INI))”, *Official Journal of the European Communities*, C 135, 7 May 2001, p. 69; and European Parliament, “European Parliament resolution of 30 November 2000 on the progress achieved in the implementation of the common foreign and security policy (C5-0255/2000 - 2000/2038 (INI))”, *Official Journal of the European Communities*, C 228, 13 August 2001, p. 173.

training”.²³ However, the available external relations training was “still much shorter in length, more fragmentary and far less systematic than the training most national foreign ministries provide for their own staff” and lacked a close link to professional development and career planning.²⁴ Although some EU member states recognised the need for more common diplomatic training, initiatives in this regard were rather limited. In May 1999 France and Germany in a non-paper circulated during an informal meeting of the Council working group responsible for training floated the idea of a European Diplomatic Academy.²⁵ However, this proposal was considered too ambitious, and it was later downgraded to the European Diplomatic Programme (see below).

Under the chairmanship of Jean-Luc Dehaene, the Working Group on External Action of the Convention on the Future of Europe in 2002 also dealt with training aspects. A paper submitted by Iñigo Méndez de Vigo highlighted again the need for a European Diplomatic Academy: training would serve as an effective tool to build up personal relations between foreign policy actors, to enhance knowledge of the different national backgrounds and interests and to create a common European strategic and administrative culture and a “spécificité du métier diplomatique européen”.²⁶ The suggestion was taken up in the final report of the Working Group on External Action. Yet both the ill-fated Constitutional Treaty, signed in 2004, and the Treaty of Lisbon, signed in 2007, remained silent on the question of diplomatic training.

In 2009 the European Parliament again called for “setting up a European diplomatic college which, in close cooperation with appropriate bodies in the Member States, would provide Union officials and officials of the Member States who are to work in external relations functions with training based on uniformly harmonised curricula”.²⁷ The ‘Reflection Group on the Future of Europe 2030’ in its final report to the European Council in May 2010 equally stated that indeed “a European diplomatic academy

²³ European Parliament, C 135, 7.5.2001, *op.cit.*, p. 71.

²⁴ Jörg Monar, “The Case for a Diplomatic Academy of the European Union”, *European Foreign Affairs Review*, vol. 5, no. 3, 2000, p. 282.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

²⁶ Iñigo Méndez de Vigo, “Towards the Establishment of a Common European Diplomacy”, Working group VII – ‘External Action’, Working Document 55, The European Convention, Brussels, 3 December 2002, p. 6.

²⁷ European Parliament, “European Parliament resolution of 22 October 2009 on the institutional aspects of setting up the European External Action Service (2009/2133(INI))”, *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 265 E, 30 September 2010, p. 14.

would contribute to a sense of common diplomatic culture".²⁸ However, the Council Decision of July 2010 establishing the EEAS in Art. 6(12) only foresees that "[s]teps shall be taken in order to provide EEAS staff with adequate common training, building in particular on existing practices and structures at national and Union level".²⁹

The following sections present the EU's pre-Lisbon legacy in terms of external relations training. Five types of training can be identified: (1) in-house training in DG Relex (now the EEAS), (2) in-house training in other relevant Commission DGs, (3) in-house training in Brussels or in the member states through mutual opening up of training offers or 'on the job training' through exchanges, (4) the European-level coordination of member state training in certain security fields, and (5) joint training initiatives of the EU and its member states.

In-house training

The 1997 Communication on the development of the External Service of the Commission criticised that each DG had an independent training plan for staff; and it advocated an integrated approach.³⁰ For in-house training, the Communication suggested an induction course for officials entering the External Service or the 'Relex family' DGs, continuous knowledge- and skills-based training throughout the year and pre-posting training for staff leaving for Delegations, including country-specific briefings and training in specific techniques. Target groups included Heads of Delegation, 'A grade' staff, administrative assistants, secretaries and spouses. It was suggested that local staff be trained as well and that officials requiring training in 'hard' languages (e.g. Arabic, Chinese or Russian) be selected sufficiently far in advance of their posting.³¹ However, not all of these proposals were put in practice.

The in-house training in external relations has developed around three main components. First, executive courses are provided in Brussels through a framework contract with external training institutions and through the internal programme 'Train4Diplo' which was launched in 2007. DG Relex provided around 100 courses on thematic and geographic issues and diplomatic skills as well as 30 policy debates per year.³²

²⁸ *Project Europe 2030: Challenges and Opportunities. A Report to the European Council by the Reflection Group on the Future of the EU 2030*, May 2010, Brussels, p. 37.

²⁹ Council of the European Union, "Council Decision 2010/427/EU", *op.cit.*, Art. 6.12.

³⁰ European Commission, SEC(97) 605, *op.cit.*, Annex II, pp. 1-2.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-6.

³² Lloveras Soler, *op.cit.*, p. 16.

The courses of 'Train4Diplo' have been open to all officials of the 'Relex family' staff, the Council Secretariat and the member states. In 2010 it included courses and debates provided by internal experts as well as 17 courses delivered by external training institutions.³³ Finally, with the emergence of European Political Cooperation, DG Relex had already in 1973 begun to organise several training sessions per year in Brussels for junior respectively senior member state diplomats on Community policies and on CFSP matters.

Second, courses on more technical, management and budgetary aspects are offered by other DGs (e.g. Human Resources and Security, Communication or Informatics) and the European Administrative School (EAS). The EAS is an inter-institutional service which was set up in 2005 to provide training for recent recruits, staff who exercise management responsibilities or who may be called on to do so, and assistant-grade staff selected as having the potential to become administrators. It also runs an 'administrative Erasmus programme' for young national civil servants to spend a short time in Brussels.

Third, the 'Diplomatic Training Programme' (DTP) aims to mutually grant access to training programmes in DG Relex (now the EEAS) and the member states. It arose out of the 2006 Communication 'Europe in the World' which had called upon member states to "open up national diplomatic training schemes to staff in EU institutions working on external relations issues" and upon the Commission and the Council to "include national diplomats in training at EU level".³⁴ The DTP was subsequently broadened to courses that the Commission co-organises with other EU institutions, such as the Interinstitutional Learning Programme on External Relations (ILPER) launched in 2009. Participation in the DTP is voluntary and based on the principle of 'costs fall where they lie'. In 2010 14 national Ministries of Foreign Affairs had opened 60 courses to officials from the Commission and the Council Secretariat, while the Commission had opened 41 courses to member state officials.³⁵ The relevant courses organised by other Directorates-General such as DG Trade or DG Development (e.g. 'Train4Dev') have been made accessible as well. The mutual opening up of programmes furthermore acquired an enhanced dimension of 'on the job training' with the Diplomatic Exchange and Secondment Programme (DESP) which began in

³³ European Commission, Flyer "Train4Diplo Diplomatic Training Path 2010", Brussels, 2010.

³⁴ European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Council of June 2006, "Europe in the World – Some Practical Proposals for Greater Coherence, Effectiveness and Visibility", COM(2006) 278 final, Brussels, 8 June 2006, p. 9.

³⁵ European Commission, Flyer "Diplomatic Training Programme DTP 2010", Brussels, 2010.

2007.³⁶ Already before the DESP, a (small) number of national diplomats and other officials have served in 'Relex family' DGs, and in 1996 the Commission had extended this partnership programme to the secondment of national officials in Delegations.³⁷ In addition, the Junior Experts in Delegation (JED) programme, initiated by the Commission in 1984, offered qualified university graduates from EU member states employment as a full member of the 'administrative and technical staff' of an EU Delegation situated in particular in developing countries for a period of up to two years. These junior experts are financed by the Commission or by member states and can participate in the pre-posting training.³⁸

In addition to these forms of in-house training, there are jointly created training programmes of the EU institutions and the member states as well as European coordination networks of member state training. The first of these initiatives set out below is directed at diplomatic training in the narrow sense, while the others are more security-related programmes.

The joint European Diplomatic Programme

In 1999 the Council's Political Committee approved the European Diplomatic Programme in response to the need for more trained personnel as the Common Foreign and Security Policy developed.³⁹ The EDP is a common project of the member states and the EU institutions. The first edition of the EDP took place in 2000-2001. The programme, stretching roughly from September to May, consists of five modules comprising in total 14 to 17 days. The opening module is hosted by the member state holding the Presidency during the first semester of the cycle and the second module is organised by the EU institutions.⁴⁰ During the third module participants pay an individual exchange visit to another member state. The fourth module, usually a negotiation simulation, takes place in a member state volunteering as a host. The closing module is held in the member state holding the Presidency during the second semester of the edition.

³⁶ European Commission, COM(2006) 278 final, *op.cit.*, p. 9.

³⁷ European Commission, COM(1999) 180 final, *op.cit.*, pp. 7-8.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³⁹ Council of the European Union, "European Diplomatic Programme (EDP)", Brussels, 13807/99, 6 December 1999.

⁴⁰ Council of the European Union, "European Diplomatic Programme (EDP) – Approval of the Updated Text", Brussels, 9705/09, 8 May 2009.

Usually, there is an 'over-arching theme' for each year, for example transatlantic relations, energy or neighbourhood policy. The practical implementation rested with the 'troika' – the Presidency in office, the following Presidency, the Commission's External Service and the Council Secretariat. As of 2011 the EEAS is in charge in association with the two Presidencies, the Commission and the Council Secretariat. The target group are (mainly junior) diplomats of national Ministries of Foreign Affairs as well as officials from the EEAS, the Commission and the Council Secretariat. Organisational and administrative costs are covered by the party in charge of organising a module, whereas participants' home institutions bear the costs for travel and accommodation. The programme is supervised by the Working Party 'CFSP Administrative Affairs and Protocol' (COADM), which for this purpose is composed of the Training Directors of the national Ministries of Foreign Affairs. They meet during the opening and closing sessions of each cycle.

The aims of the programme are described as "the creation of personal networks among European diplomats, thereby contributing to the creation of a European identity in foreign policy", "the raising of national diplomatic consciousness with regard to the specifically European dimension of diplomacy" and the provision of "a teaching environment, where the training effort is focused within an original framework unachievable within the strictly national setting".⁴¹ These aims seem to indicate that the overall objective is in a sense 'Europeanisation'. In terms of teaching the courses are to impart knowledge and train in diplomatic skills, but also "sensitise participants through practical case studies to national and European interests" and "create a sense of common European purpose through training in joint problem-solving".⁴² Every year between 50 and 60 young civil servants may benefit from the EDP, yet the programme is not linked to EEAS recruitment.

Whereas the EDP deals with foreign policy from a diplomatic angle, the other training schemes set out below are more focused on security issues.

European networks to coordinate security training

Upon the initiative of the European Council, two virtual colleges – the European Police College and the European Security and Defence College – as well as

⁴¹ Council of the European Union, "European Diplomatic Programme", 1999, *op.cit.*, pp. 1-2.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

programmes dealing with civilian aspects of crisis management have been launched.

European Police College

The European Council of October 1999 in Tampere decided to set up a European Police College (CEPOL – Collège européen de police) for the training of senior law enforcement officials from EU member states and candidate countries.⁴³ One year later, CEPOL was established as “a network of existing national training institutes, without precluding the establishment of a permanent institution at a later stage”.⁴⁴ In 2004 it gained legal personality and its seat was based in Bramshill, UK, with a permanent secretariat assisting with administrative tasks. In 2006 CEPOL began operating as an agency of the European Union, financed by the general EU budget.⁴⁵

CEPOL trains senior police officers and develops a European approach to common problems in the fight against crime, crime prevention and the maintenance of law and order and public security, in particular the cross-border dimensions of those problems. CEPOL’s objectives are to increase knowledge of the national police systems, to strengthen cross-border police cooperation, to improve knowledge of international and EU instruments (e.g. EU institutions, Europol, Eurojust) and to provide training with regard to respect for democratic safeguards.⁴⁶ The implementation of activities takes place at the national police training colleges. CEPOL provides common curricula, e-learning and an exchange programme.⁴⁷

The CEPOL network functions as a European law enforcement education platform. Beyond police, however, only few EU member states have training institutions for civilian experts, while training in the field of military crisis management is usually addressed by their military academies.

⁴³ European Council, “Presidency Conclusions of the Tampere European Council, Tampere, 15-16 October 1999”, para 47.

⁴⁴ Council of the European Union, “Council Decision of 22 December 2000 establishing a European Police College (CEPOL) (2000/820/JHA)”, *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 336, 30.12.2000, p. 1.

⁴⁵ Council of the European Union, “Council Decision 2005/681/JHA of 20 September 2005 establishing the European Police College (CEPOL) and repealing Decision 2000/820/JHA”, *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 256, 1.10.2005, pp. 63-70.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Art. 6.

⁴⁷ www.cepola.europa.eu

Civilian Crisis Management Training

In the aftermath of the Feira European Council in June 2000, which called for “the development and the implementation of EU capabilities in civilian aspects of crisis management”,⁴⁸ the European Commission in October 2001 launched a pilot project on ‘Training for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management’ which then was institutionalised as the European Group on Training (EGT). It seeks to advance the civilian component of the EU’s ability to mitigate crisis management by developing training courses and material and by fostering cooperation with the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the United Nations and international NGOs.⁴⁹ The training targets civilians at an operational level designated to serve in international missions (e.g. judges, prosecutors, human rights observers, local administrators, infrastructure experts, social workers, teachers, and journalists).

The EGT is an open network operating on an informal basis with a rotating chairmanship. It comprises European training institutions and NGO training providers as well as relevant ministries engaged in the recruitment and training of civilian crisis management personnel. It was initially funded by the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights and then by the Instrument for Stability.

While the EGT continues to exist as a platform for coordination, the training courses are to a large extent taken over by a new, separate initiative focusing on civilian crisis management. In early 2011 the capacity-building programme ‘Europe’s New Training Initiative for Civilian Crisis Management’ (ENTRi) was launched.⁵⁰ It is mainly funded by the Instrument for Stability and guided by the Foreign Policy Instruments Service, a service of the European Commission co-located with the European External Action Service. The pre-deployment and specialisation courses aim at staff of international crisis management missions for the European Union, the United Nations, the OSCE and the African Union. ENTRi currently has 13 members compared to 21 countries being represented in the EGT.

Since there is no central EU pool of trained personnel, a clear link between training and deployment is still missing. The EGT has also been criticised for fragmentation and lack of coordination, for a supply-driven provision of training (that is, courses

⁴⁸ European Council, “Presidency Conclusions of the European Council, Santa Maria da Feira, 19-20 June 2000”, section IV.

⁴⁹ www.europeangroupontraining.eu

⁵⁰ www.entriforccm.eu

offered by training providers not corresponding to the real need and demand) as well as a sense of competition with the European Security and Defence College.⁵¹

European Security and Defence College

The Thessaloniki European Council in June 2003 endorsed the development of a coordinated EU training policy in the field of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP, now Common Security and Defence Policy CSDP).⁵² Consequently, in 2005 the European Security and Defence College was established to provide training at the strategic level, thus emphasising training for ESDP/CSDP operations and missions.⁵³ The objectives are:

- (a) to further enhance the European security culture within ESDP;
- (b) to promote a better understanding of ESDP as an essential part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP);
- (c) to provide EU instances with knowledgeable personnel able to work efficiently on all ESDP matters;
- (d) to provide Member States' administrations and staff with knowledgeable personnel familiar with EU policies, institutions and procedures; and
- (e) to help promote professional relations and contacts among training participants.⁵⁴

Three types of courses are offered: high-level, orientation and specialised topics, including internet-based distance learning. However, the ESDC is less of an institution than it sounds. It calls itself "a virtual network college",⁵⁵ making use of other civilian and military educational and research institutions, including the EU Institute for Security Studies. EU member states participate on a voluntary basis, and training has so far been financed by the principle of 'costs lie where they fall'. A small, permanent secretariat was based in the Crisis Management and Planning Directorate of the General Secretariat of the Council and is now part of the Crisis Management and Planning Department in the EEAS.

⁵¹ Julia Lieb, "Consolidating Civilian and Military Training for Crisis Management: Taking Stock of EU Initiatives", *Standard Briefing*, PE 433.824, European Parliament, Directorate-General for External Relations, Brussels, April 2010, p. 4.

⁵² European Council, "Presidency Conclusions of the Thessaloniki European Council, 19-20 June 2003", para 55.

⁵³ Council of the European Union, "Council Joint Action of 18 July 2005 establishing a European Security and Defence College (ESDC)", *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 194, 26 July 2005, pp. 15-18.

⁵⁴ Council of the European Union, "Council Joint Action 2008/550/CFSP of 23 June 2008 establishing a European Security and Defence College (ESDC) and repealing Joint Action 2005/575/CFSP", *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 176, 4 July 2008, Art. 3.

⁵⁵ esdc.mil-edu.be

The network character of the ESDC is, on the one hand, assessed as “an added value providing training measures and enrichment in terms of security cultures and experiences”, but on the other hand, “the lack of an adequate institutional basis for coordination and conceptual work” remains a major structural weakness.⁵⁶ In comparison to EGT-ENTRI, the ESDC struggles for proper funding as some member states remain reluctant.⁵⁷ These schemes still fail to provide a balance between civilian and military as well as between strategic and more field-oriented training for crisis management.⁵⁸ Moreover, they suffer from a lack of coordination and resources, especially in comparison to CEPOL.

The legacy of the pre-Lisbon training *acquis* is having a lasting effect on the EEAS. When the Service saw the light of the day in 2011, a long-term training concept was not in place yet and path-dependency prevailed over any attempts to design a fresh and adequate curriculum.

EEAS training: in search of a long-term strategy

For the time being, the EEAS has opted to continue and broaden the existing training schemes described above, while catering for the needs of both EU officials and national diplomats. The Strategic Training Framework (STF) of 2011 responds as an annual work programme to the immediate training demands of the newly established Service. It is based on three pillars:⁵⁹ (1) the courses that the EEAS itself organises on the basis of own budget lines, including the former ‘Train4Diplo’, (2) access to the training offer of the other EU institutions (mainly the European Commission and the Parliament) and CFSP entities, and (3) partnerships with EU member states and other actors.

The STF distinguishes six categories of staff: officials, temporary agents, seconded national experts, contract agents, local agents and young experts in Delegations. Besides short induction courses for newly recruited personnel, staff in headquarters can choose from several series of ‘general interest courses’ and ‘specialisation

⁵⁶ Lieb, *op.cit.*, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁷ Gauthier Jacob, “EU Training for Civilian CSDP – Which Coherence?”, *Security Policy Brief*, no. 28, Brussels, Egmont Institute, 2011, p. 6.

⁵⁸ Lieb, *op.cit.*, p. 7.

⁵⁹ The following information is based on an interview with Stella Zervoudaki, Head of Training, EEAS, Brussels, 30 September 2011. See also Raïssa A. Marteaux, *Enhancing Coherence and Consistency in EU External Action: The Importance of Training and Selection of EEAS Diplomats*, Master's thesis, Bruges, College of Europe, 2011, pp. 62-66.

courses', complemented by activities enhancing 'corporate culture' such as lunch policy debates, workshops, team-building exercises and coaching. Both types of courses are divided into 'thematic courses', which focus on basic knowledge of EU external policies, diplomacy and regions, and 'competences courses', which cover specific functions such as political reporting, protocol, public diplomacy, negotiations or open intelligence. The creation of the EEAS has strongly increased the Delegations' responsibility to send political reports to Brussels.⁶⁰ In addition, special courses are dedicated to protective security issues (e.g. IT security, exchange of classified information, hostile environment awareness training).

The courses offered specifically to Delegation staff, in addition to the courses set out above, comprise pre-posting training such as induction courses for new (deputy) Heads of Delegation or project management cycle and budget rules; management and financial management training; and annual seminars per function (e.g. for heads of administration, Heads of Delegation, assistants, local agents, political counsellors, press officers or trade counsellors). Distance learning is expected to become more important, especially for EU Delegations (which continue to include a considerable number of Commission officials). The Commission, in particular DG Human Resources, is thus building up capacities for e-learning and blended training.

The EEAS disposes of an own budget for training but on the basis of service-level agreements EEAS officials also have access to Commission courses. This is particularly important in the areas of languages, human resources and career development (mainly via DG Human Resources, DG DIGIT and the European Administrative School) as well as for programming and project management through DG DEVCO and DG ECHO. CFSP issues are also covered by the European Security and Defence College and in cooperation with the Commission's Foreign Policy Instruments Service. Specific training is also available for EU Military Staff (EUMS), the staff of the Crisis Management and Planning Department (CMPD) and of the Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC). For certain courses the EEAS also works with international organisations, in particular the United Nations and the Council of Europe, as well as with external service providers. In partnership with the member states, the European Diplomatic Programme, the DTP and the EEAS seminars for junior and senior diplomats have been kept.

⁶⁰ Federica Bicchì, "The European External Action Service: A Pivotal Actor in EU Foreign Policy Communications?", *The Hague Journal of Diplomacy*, vol. 7, no. 1, 2012, pp. 89-91.

The weaknesses of the panoply of courses offered by the EU institutions rest in their lack of coordination and of a joint curriculum, the risk of duplication, the absence of a clear training strategy, the lack of suitable training facilities, the short duration of modules as well as the need for a firm quality assurance mechanism.⁶¹

The 2011 STF has improved the training offer, within the limits of the available budget, by introducing new courses in view of the political and operational priorities of the EEAS (e.g. crisis management, protective security, political analysis, languages) and by focusing more on an interactive delivery methodology, online courses and e-learning tools. Yet, the STF still faces certain shortcomings. Given the difficulty of staff members to free themselves from work for any extended period of time, training remains limited to an indicative target of 10 days per year per staff member. It cannot meet the requirements of a conventional diplomatic training programme nor can the short duration of the courses with changing participants ensure the development of an 'esprit de corps'. For that purpose, more structure, resources and coordination would be required.

Duke suggests that "a common induction programme, which is then complemented by tailored activities that stress skills as well as knowledge linked to specific functions, will be necessary to meet the diverse needs and roles of EEAS staff".⁶² He argues in favour of a modular approach that takes into account the staff members' background and tasks and combines internal training (in particular technical and financial management as well as languages) with outsourced training activities.⁶³

Besides the training needs emanating from the heterogeneous composition of the EEAS, its task expansion and desired impact on EU external action, the changing nature of diplomacy itself can also be expected to affect training. In recent years, for instance, the concept of networks has gained prominence as the diplomatic field faces more actors, more channels of communication and more issues to deal with:⁶⁴ first, actors are increasingly part of various networks in addition to the traditional hierarchy in which diplomacy is embedded. On the one hand, many important

⁶¹ Duke, *op.cit.*, pp. 104-105.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 96.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 108-111.

⁶⁴ This has, for instance, been confirmed by the international conference "Challenges Facing the 21st Century Diplomat: Representation, Communication, Negotiation and Training" held by the Department of EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies at the College of Europe in Bruges on 25-26 October 2011. See conference report www.coleurope.eu/diplomacy21

areas of today's international relations (such as human rights, development cooperation, health, sustainable development or conflict prevention) would be unthinkable without the active contribution of the NGO community and other non-state actors. On the other hand, global governance today is becoming increasingly inconceivable without the new role – and responsibility – of the emerging powers. Second, new information tools and media (such as the worldwide web) function as networks and are of utmost importance for a profession which relies so much on communication. Public diplomacy has become increasingly important, and in case of intercultural communication crises governments must react very fast. Third, the diplomats or Ministries of Foreign Affairs are no longer 'gatekeepers' but part of larger vertical and horizontal networks, encompassing for instance 'summittrisation' and 'sectoralisation' of diplomacy. For many domestic issues there are experts in national ministries or other government offices who have also established networks of foreign contacts with their homologues in other countries and international organisations.

As a result, modern diplomats must share their competence with other officials, scientists and private actors and work together. They have become 'managers of complexity', coordinators and facilitators, able to insert political understanding into complex problems and to enhance coherence across issues and between interests and values. Hence, concerning training, the modern diplomat should ideally be a generalist who has acquired knowledge and skills that make him or her a specialist in the art of diplomacy – a 'master of managing relationships' or simply an excellent networker.

In order to train networking skills, to help bridge national and institutional divides and to build an 'esprit de corps', early and repeated joint training may play a crucial role for EEAS staff. Hence, the idea of a European diplomatic academy, promoted since the late 1990s by various actors such as the European Parliament, may in the longer run resurface more powerfully.

A European Diplomatic Academy?

Beyond the coordination and consolidation of existing programmes, the EU could consider setting up a European Diplomatic Academy, either as a virtual diplomatic academy or as a physical diplomatic academy. Both scenarios come with

advantages and disadvantages. Instead of alternatives, they could also be seen as two steps in a sequence from short to long term.

Virtual diplomatic academy

A virtual diplomatic academy would take a format similar to the ESDC, but focus more broadly on foreign affairs and diplomacy. A network of current programmes, yet under a common umbrella, would facilitate cooperation between the EEAS and the member states in terms of a joint curriculum development, sharing courses and common evaluation methods and it would help reduce duplication. An added value could be joint training in a few centres of excellence or joint pre-posting training by the EEAS and the member states for staff being sent to the same region. This would constitute an improvement over the status quo, allowing for a larger choice of courses and methods, yet it would still come with certain weaknesses.

As Monar rightly points out, a network solution “would most likely mean a series of courses scattered over different places and affected by coordination problems and considerable differences in teaching methods and priorities”.⁶⁵ The network members would be tempted to base their training modules on existing ones and, as a result, “the training would lack the coherence, quality and spirit of originality which a truly European diplomatic training requires”.⁶⁶

These shortcomings of a virtual network were illustrated by the European Diplomatic Training Initiative (EDTI) which – in view of the development of the External Service – arose out of discussions at the International Forum on Diplomatic Training (IFDT), a worldwide network of diplomatic academies and international relations institutes.⁶⁷ The EDTI perceived the need of a specifically European training programme in light of the EU’s Eastern enlargement and the perspective of a European External Action Service. The group comprised seventeen institutions in twelve member states delivering training in diplomacy, European and international studies.⁶⁸ However, the project did not develop beyond the pilot training courses that took place in 2005. It

⁶⁵ Monar, *op.cit.*, p. 284.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ The IFDT was founded in 1973 by a group of foreign service schools such as the Diplomatic Academy Vienna, Georgetown University, the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, the Netherlands Institute of International Relations ‘Clingendael’, the International Relations Institute of Cameroon, the Diplomatic Institute Cairo, Oxford University, ENA Paris, the Italian Diplomatic Institute, and the College of Europe Bruges. Participation in its annual meetings has since grown rapidly.

⁶⁸ www.edti.org

showed the difficulties of coordinating a large number of participating institutions, the sensitivities of different national diplomatic models and the high costs for delivering effective training in small groups without a campus.

In terms of content, a European Diplomatic Academy ideally needs to combine academic and professional training, knowledge and skills; it should draw on a multinational network of faculty members and take into account the respective needs of national diplomats and EU officials. Based on a training needs analysis, the programme should rather be designed at the drawing board instead of trying to reconcile disparate existing elements provided by various institutions, thus allowing for more innovation and flexibility. Such an approach is easier to implement with a single, physical institution.

Physical diplomatic academy

The most effective solution for the formation of a real 'esprit de corps', while ensuring training in relevant knowledge and skills, would be a single European Diplomatic Academy that brings together all trainees for an extended period of time. A physical academy, ideally located away from capitals to avoid distraction, would provide the necessary "innovative, coherent and intense training environment".⁶⁹ Another advantage would be that accountability for the quality of the programmes and the delivery of capable and qualified personnel would be ensured. A European 'esprit de corps' is more likely to develop in such an environment and with a longer and/or repeated period of training. The Academy could have programmes of various lengths. The minimum would be an intensive common induction course that could then be followed up by a more tailor-made programme depending on the staff member's background, experience and position. Such a modular approach would allow for the necessary flexibility, enabling staff members to follow the courses which enhance their knowledge and competences in function of their experience and needs. Seminars on horizontal topics could still bring the different target groups together again in order to cultivate the 'esprit de corps'.⁷⁰ For local staff in EU Delegations additional e-learning facilities would be particularly important.

⁶⁹ Monar, *op.cit.*, p. 285.

⁷⁰ Duke, *op.cit.*, p. 108.

For the more distant future, the idea of a taught Master's degree in European diplomacy has been floated.⁷¹ In this context it is worth noting that the European Commission, in order to supplement its in-house training, already in 1997 proposed approaching the College of Europe in Bruges, the world's first university institute of postgraduate studies in European affairs, for the setting up of "a new foreign affairs section entitled International Relations and Diplomacy".⁷² Such a one-year Master's programme, under the name 'EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies', was in fact inaugurated in 2006 at the initiative of the College of Europe itself.⁷³ It combines the study of the EU's external relations and diplomacy with the acquisition of professional skills, including language and negotiation skills, in the College's typical multicultural environment.

While the existing initiatives in EU diplomatic training are valuable efforts, they risk remaining a patchwork that lacks coordination and capacity. Consolidating training on one campus would provide economies of scale as well as promote an EU 'esprit de corps' by mixing national and EU officials for a longer time period, preferably in residence in order to ensure a truly European experience and focus. By bringing in a multinational faculty, participants would still be exposed to different training methods and learning experiences as in a virtual academy, yet there would be a more tailor-made and coherent curriculum and better training facilities.

The major drawback of this model is that thus far EU member states – although they consider an 'esprit de corps' important for their own national diplomatic services – have been reluctant to seriously consider it. They cherish their diverse traditions of diplomatic training with different recruitment criteria, language requirements, length and contents of courses. The question of resources certainly has to be raised as well, and whenever a new institution is created, a turf war among member states about its seat seems unavoidable. In fact, several locations have already been put forward, most vocally by Italy which favours the European University Institute in Florence.⁷⁴

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 113; and interview with Stella Zervoudaki, *op.cit.*

⁷² European Commission, SEC(97) 605, *op.cit.*, Annex II, p. 3.

⁷³ www.coleurope.eu/ird

⁷⁴ Franco Frattini, "The European External Action Service: a Look into EU Diplomat Training", *European View*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2009, p. 226.

Members of the European Parliament and others have added the College of Europe.⁷⁵

An academy could offer a common diplomatic culture, combining lessons and best practices from national and European training institutions as well as accommodating the demands of different target groups. It would afford “easier coordination, better quality control, more innovation and a stronger focus on the European dimensions of diplomacy”.⁷⁶ Joint training of EU officials and national diplomats is likely to induce important socialisation effects in terms of EU officials becoming sensitised towards national concerns and national diplomats learning about common European interests.⁷⁷ After all, EEAS diplomats must be able to understand EU policies and positions and to effectively communicate or ‘sell’ them abroad.

Conclusion: a training strategy for strategic training

This paper has examined the development of the EU’s external relations training over time and the underlying causes. While the European Commission launched diplomatic training rather late in the 1990s, it quickly gained momentum. Overall, the EU’s approach has, however, remained rather reactive and *ad hoc*. It underwent changes in response to internal factors like Treaty or administrative reforms and the development of EU foreign policy as well as external factors such as the changing nature of diplomacy or of training methodologies. The Treaty of Lisbon strongly underlined the Union’s quest for a role as a global actor and for more consistency in its external action.

⁷⁵ European Parliament, “Opinion of the Committee on Foreign Affairs for the Committee on Legal Affairs on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Communities (COM(2010)0309 – C7-0146/2010 – 2010/0171(COD))”, Rapporteur: Jacek Saryusz-Wolski, PE445.792v03-00, Brussels, 4 October 2010, p. 10; Lloveras, *op.cit.*, p. 18.

⁷⁶ Duke, p. 113.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 114; Ana E. Juncos and Karolina Pomorska, “Playing the Brussels Game: Strategic Socialisation in the CFSP Council Working Groups”, *European Integration online Papers (EIoP)*, vol. 10, no. 11, 2006; Yannick Hartstein, “The Role of Seconded National Experts in the Development of the CFSP and CSDP”, in Dieter Mahncke and Sieglinde Gstöhl (eds.), *European Union Diplomacy: Coherence, Unity and Effectiveness (with a Foreword by Herman Van Rompuy)*, Brussels, Peter Lang, 2012, pp. 136-137; and Laura Rayner, *The EU Foreign Ministry and Union Embassies*, London, The Foreign Policy Centre, 2005, p. 30. This socialisation effect has also been confirmed in the evaluation of a one-week pilot training programme on the EEAS carried out at the College of Europe in Bruges in September 2010.

The heterogeneous composition, far-reaching tasks and desired impact of the EEAS call for a professional training that covers relevant knowledge and skills and is conducive to the development of a common diplomatic culture. Yet, member states have different traditions of diplomatic training and diverging views on the additional need for training of their diplomats, if any, and also the EU institutions tend to hold on to their own training *acquis*. In the medium and longer run, however, the EEAS training strategy will have to be refined, and perhaps even redefined in the interest of an effective and consistent EU external action. The design of such training needs to consider many parameters, such as the various routes of recruitment that lead into the Service, the different categories of staff and their career stages, the evolving needs of EU external action, the changing nature of diplomacy and of international relations, the available training methodologies, facilities and budgets. Such a comprehensive approach can in the long run best be implemented by a European Diplomatic Academy. In any case, putting a convincing training concept into practice will require the investment of a lot of political capital, in particular from the High Representative. In return, a successful training strategy has the potential to serve as a strategic tool for the development of the Service and of EU external action.

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